

Integrating the Monorail

Pioneer Square draft

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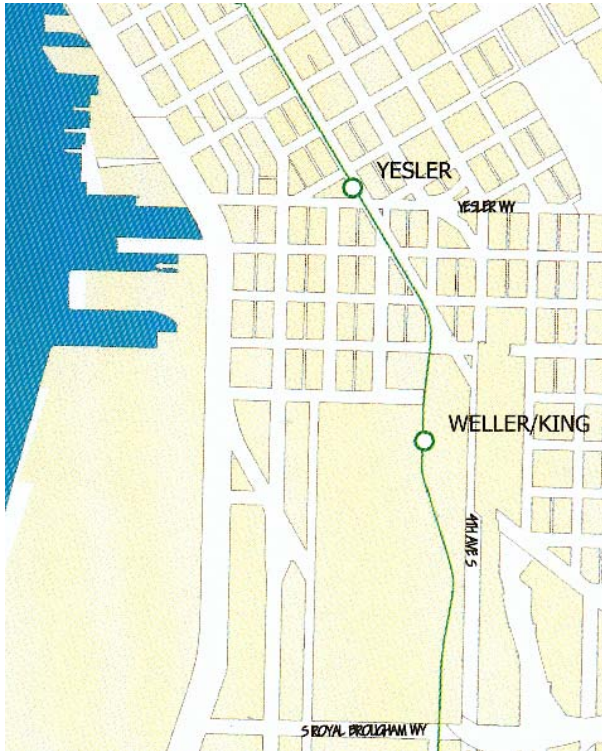
PLANNING
BACKGROUND
REPORT

JULY 2003



City of Seattle

Pioneer Square Overview



In November 2002, Seattle voters approved creation of a new public agency, the Seattle Monorail Project, to plan, design and build a 14-mile monorail system commonly known as the Green Line. The City of Seattle has initiated a station area planning program - *Integrating the Monorail* - to make the most of the opportunities presented by the Green Line and encourage the best fit between the monorail and its neighborhood setting.

This planning background report for *Integrating the Monorail: Pioneer Square* summarizes existing plans and conditions in the Pioneer Square segment of the Green Line corridor. Planning background reports for each of the Green Line corridor segments, as well as an overview of the City's station area planning program, are also available (see <http://www.seattle.gov/monorail>).

The Green Line route continues southward from the downtown's Commercial Core along Second Avenue. The route crosses into the Pioneer Square Preservation District at Cherry Street, and the first station in the Pioneer Square neighborhood would replace the "Sinking Ship" parking garage at Yesler Street. Turning due south along the Second Avenue South near South Washington Street, the guideway would run west of the King Street Station's tower and serve a station located near the Weller Street bridge. The route continues south past the football stadium toward Safeco Field.

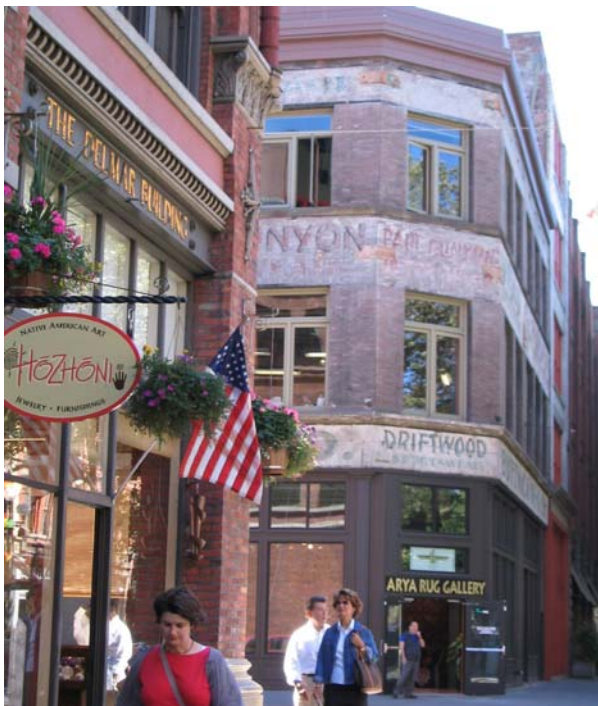
Historic and Cultural Resources

Pioneer Square was the commercial center of early Seattle, and today is home to many of the region's oldest buildings, constructed shortly after the Great Seattle Fire of 1889. Pioneer Square is a thriving neighborhood with a strong arts community, unique stores, and a wide range of offices and services. The Pioneer Square Preservation District was established as both a National historic district and a local preservation district in 1970.

Buildings of note along the alignment within the Pioneer Square Preservation District:

- Bailey Block, 615-623 Second Avenue (includes Broderick Building), 1889-1891
- Butler Block, Second & James, 1893
- Alaska Building, 618 Second Avenue, 1904
- Corona Hotel, 606-610 Second Avenue, 1903
- Hartford Building, 600 Second Avenue, 1929
- Smith Tower, 506 Second Avenue, 1914*
- Collins Building, 520 Second Avenue, 1893
- King Street Station, Third Avenue and South King Street, 1906*

*denotes Historic Designation



||||| Neighborhood Plan Summary

Neighborhood Vision and Goals

- *Catalyze Housing Development* – Develop an incentive package to stimulate private development of middle income housing. Get a major project started.
- *Develop the North Kingdome Lot* – Secure a conditional property transfer requiring a substantial housing element, parking, and retail.
- *Improve Public Safety, Cleanliness and Behavior Standards* – Improve service by the City Police Department, Parks Department and SDOT. Explore a pilot model for improved police service in Pioneer Square. Promote the continued success of CleanScapes.
- *Build Pedestrian Linkages* – Facilitate strong coordination and partnering among projects to strengthen the neighborhood’s unique historic character and arts identity.
- *Improve Access During Events and Secure a Community Parking Facility* – Secure a community-managed parking facility. Implement a pass program for residential and employee access. Implement aggressive Transportation Demand Management (TDM) recommendations for best results.
- *Develop the Parking Lots on the East Side of Occidental Park* – Develop the eastern side of Occidental Park to promote pedestrian activity through the addition of retail opportunities and increased parking supply.

Key Activities and Current Issues

- *Occidental Park and Corridor* – Pioneer Square has received Pro Parks funding to make improvements in Occidental Park, Pioneer Square Park and along the Occidental Corridor between Yesler Way and South King Street. The proposed “Sinking Ship” station is located at the north end of the Occidental Corridor.
- *Safety and Cleanliness* – Pioneer Square has received grants to add additional police services, to make pedestrian lighting improvements and to develop a “dumpster free alley” program in conjunction with CleanScapes. The City has recently designated Pioneer Square as an Alcohol Impact Area in order to limit sales of fortified and single container liquor products.
- *North Kingdome Lot* – Redeveloping the North Kingdome parking lot with at least 400 units of housing has been one of the highest priorities and most challenging activities of the Pioneer Square Neighborhood Plan. The proposed station at Weller Street should be coordinated with all of the parties to the North Kingdome Parking Lot Development Agreement (King County, the Stadium Authority, City of Seattle and Vulcan Inc.) The State of Washington, Amtrak, Sound Transit, Burlington Northern and intra-city bus operators also have an interest in the future disposition of these adjoining properties.
- *Community Parking Facilities* – The Pioneer Square Association, neighborhood businesses, and residents continue to have an interest in shared parking opportunities to address the needs of retail and residential stakeholders. A parking validation program has been initiated but is limited to specific lots and business participants. Consider tradeoffs between loss of parking and redevelopment on the North Lot and “Sinking Ship” sites.

Comprehensive Plan Housing and Employment Goals

The Second Avenue and Yesler Way station is located at the junction between the Commercial Core and Pioneer Square Urban Villages. Within a quarter-mile of the station, there would be capacity for 11,100 jobs and 900 units.

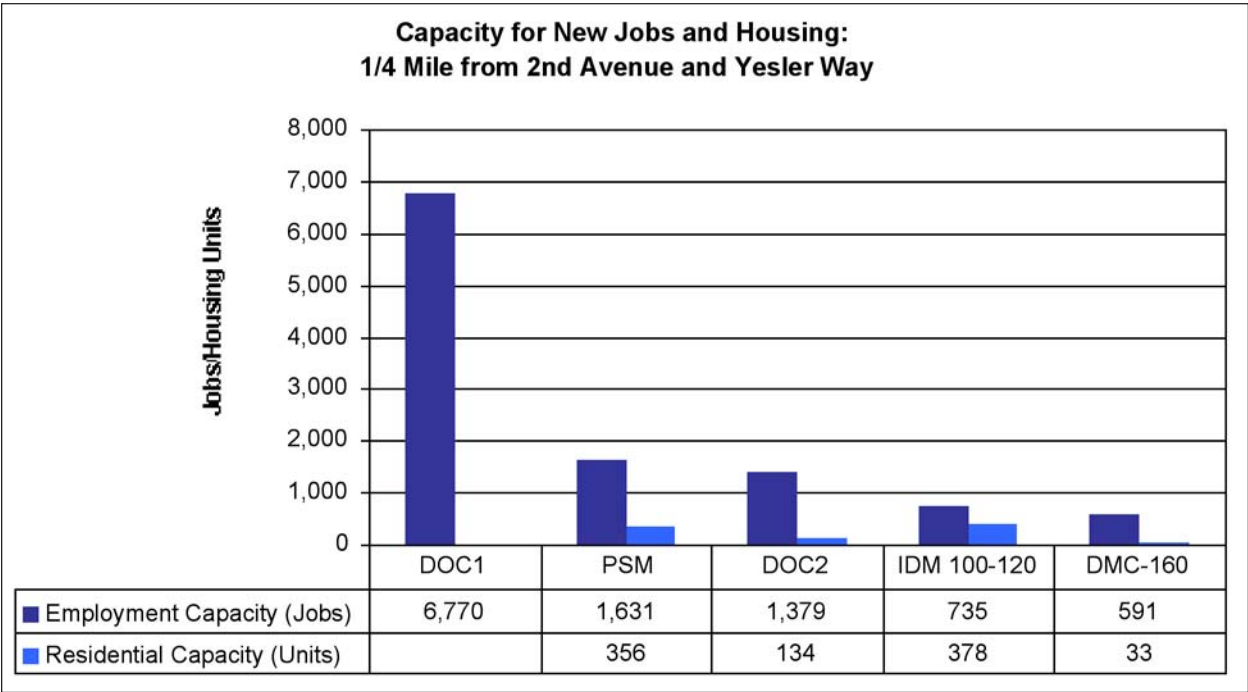
The area with the most capacity for development is in the office core to the northeast of the station. Much of this area is also within the station area for the Second Avenue and Madison Street station. Other areas with capacity include the Pioneer Square Mixed zone to the south of the station, and to a lesser extent the International District to the east of the station. These areas overlap with the station area for the Third Avenue and Weller Street station.

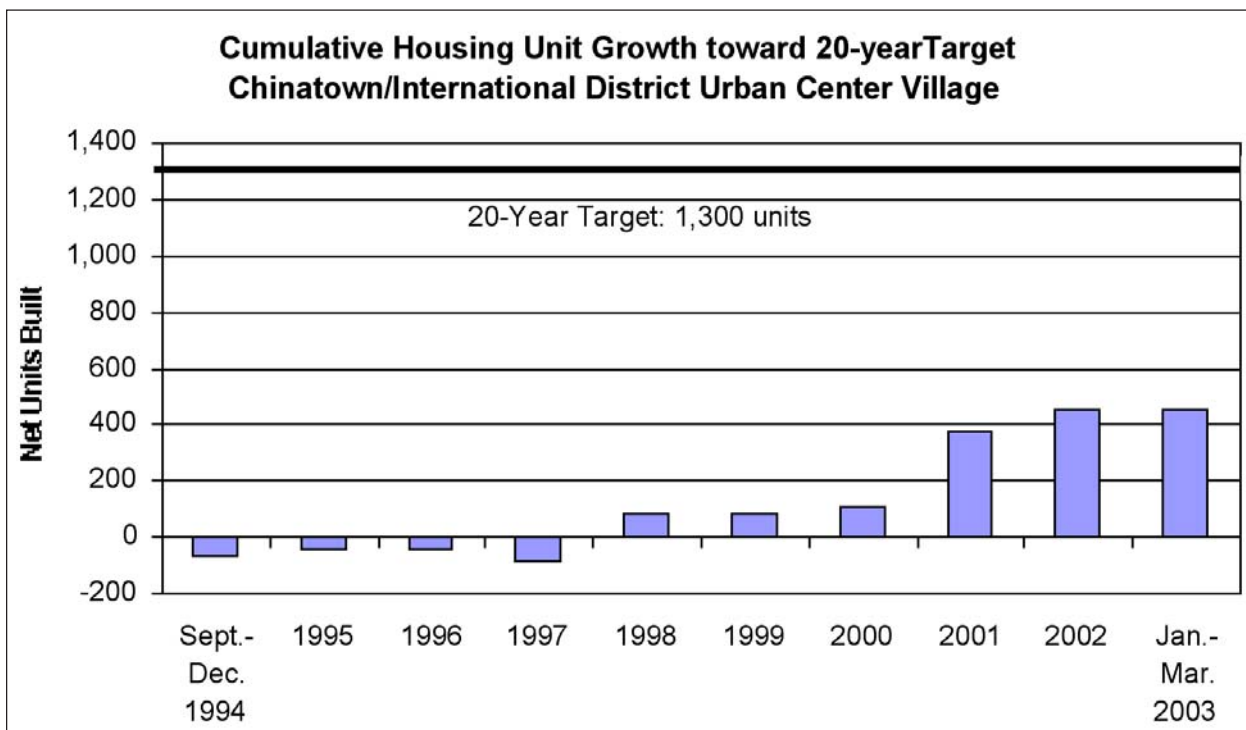
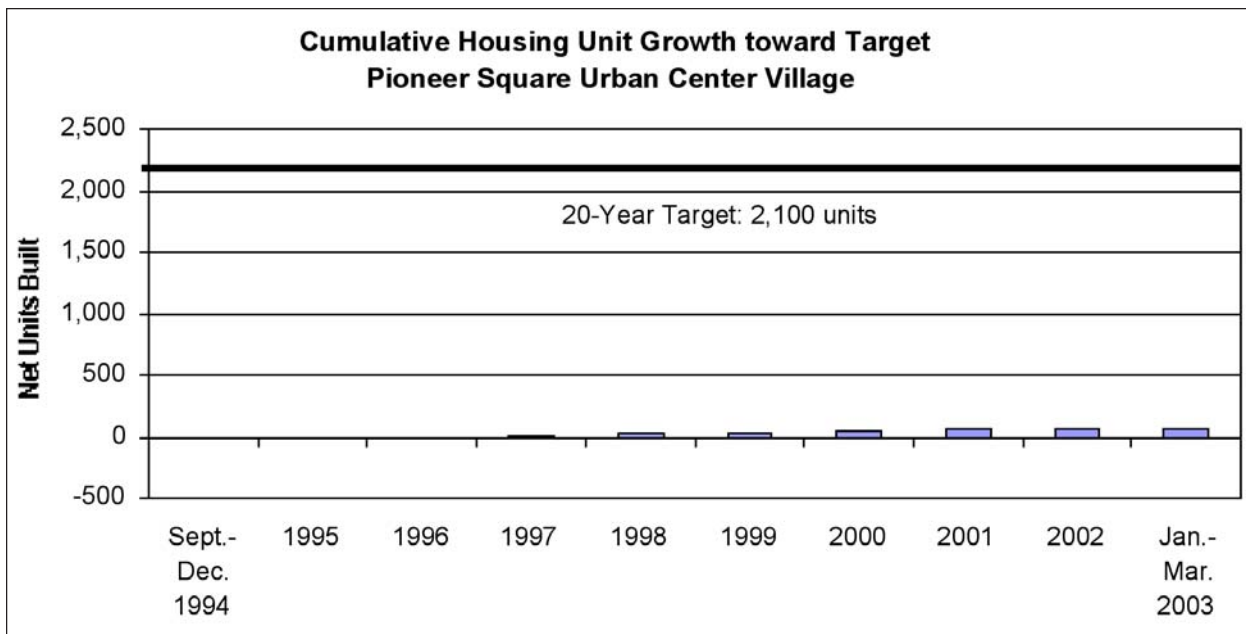
Three Green Line stations would be within a quarter-mile of the Pioneer Square Urban Center Village. Together, the Second Avenue & Yesler Way, Weller

Street/King Street, and Safeco Field stations encompass 134 acres out of the 142 acres of the urban center village. The urban center village designation is intended to support the enhancement of Pioneer Square’s mixed-use residential and employment character.

Pioneer Square has met 3% of its 20-year housing growth target over the last 8 years. Between 1994 and 2003, the neighborhood saw a net increase of 61 units in the village, a 8% increase in housing units in the village. Housing units that currently have their building permits and are potentially under construction would add another 45 units to the village.

Between 1995 and 2001, employment grew 6% in Pioneer Square, an increase of 700 jobs. Over this period, job growth was strongest in the engineering, accounting and management industries, which





includes many research and development jobs. Jobs were lost in the retail industry. The urban center village has a 20-year job growth target of 4,800 new jobs, of which it has met 15% in six years.

Two Green Line stations would be within a quarter-mile of the Chinatown/International District Urban

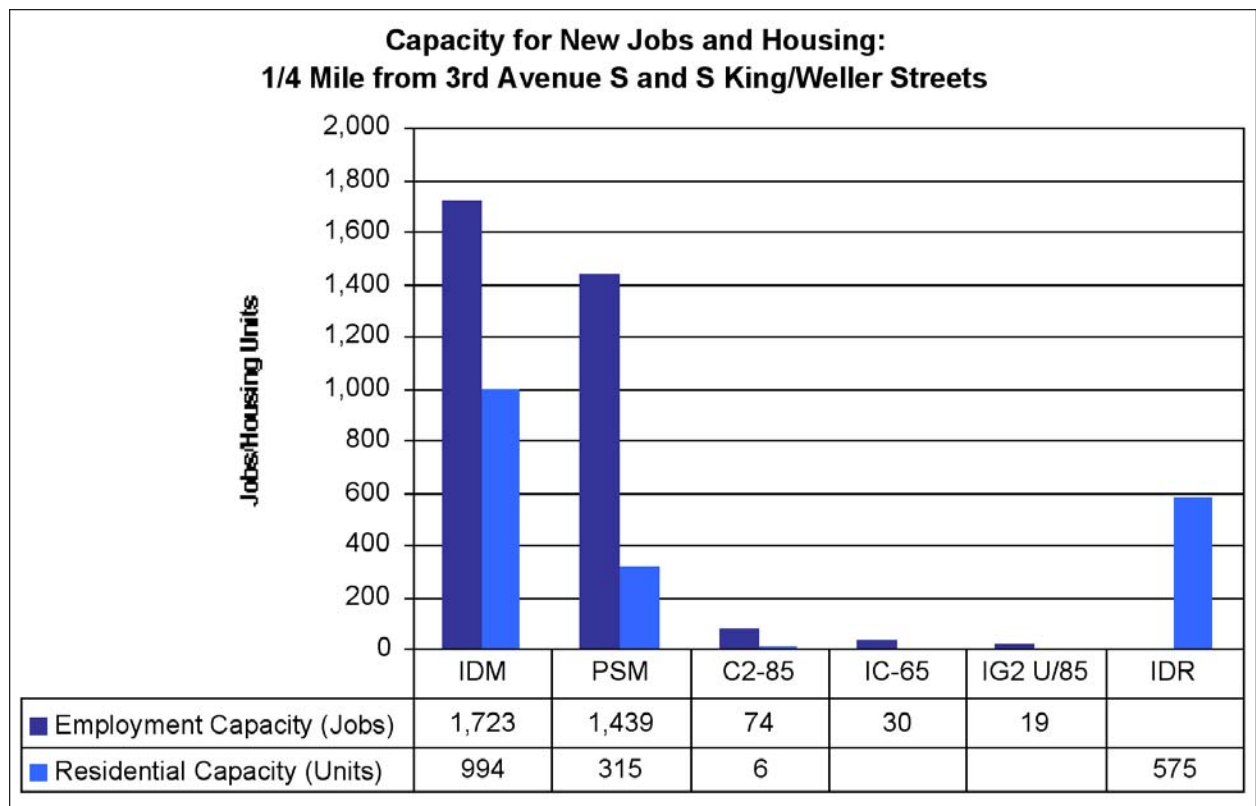
Center Village. Together, the Second Avenue & Yesler Way and Weller Street/King Street stations encompass 42 acres out of the 171 acres of the urban center village. The urban center village designation is intended to support the enhancement of Chinatown/International District's mixed-use residential and employment character.

The Chinatown/International District has met 3% of its 20-year housing growth target over the last 8 years. Between 1994 and 2003, the neighborhood saw a net increase of 61 units in the village, a 8% increase in housing units in the village. Housing units that currently have their building permits and are potentially under construction would add another 45 units to the village.

Between 1995 and 2001, employment grew 6% in the Chinatown/International District, an increase of 260 jobs. Over this period, job growth was strongest in a number of different service industries. Employment was lost in wholesale trade and government. The urban center village has a 20-year job growth target of 2,800 new jobs, of which it has met 9% in six years.

The King Street Station Green Line station would be located on the boundary between Pioneer Square and the Chinatown/International District. Overall, there is capacity for approximately 3,300 additional jobs and 1,900 additional housing units within a quarter-mile of this station location.

Locations where development could occur can be found scattered throughout the Chinatown/International District and Pioneer Square on surface parking lots, and on sites with one- or two-story buildings dating from the 1950s and 1960s. Many of the developable sites in this station area that are in the Pioneer Square Mixed zone, are also within a quarter-mile of the Second Avenue and Yesler Way station.



||||| Transportation

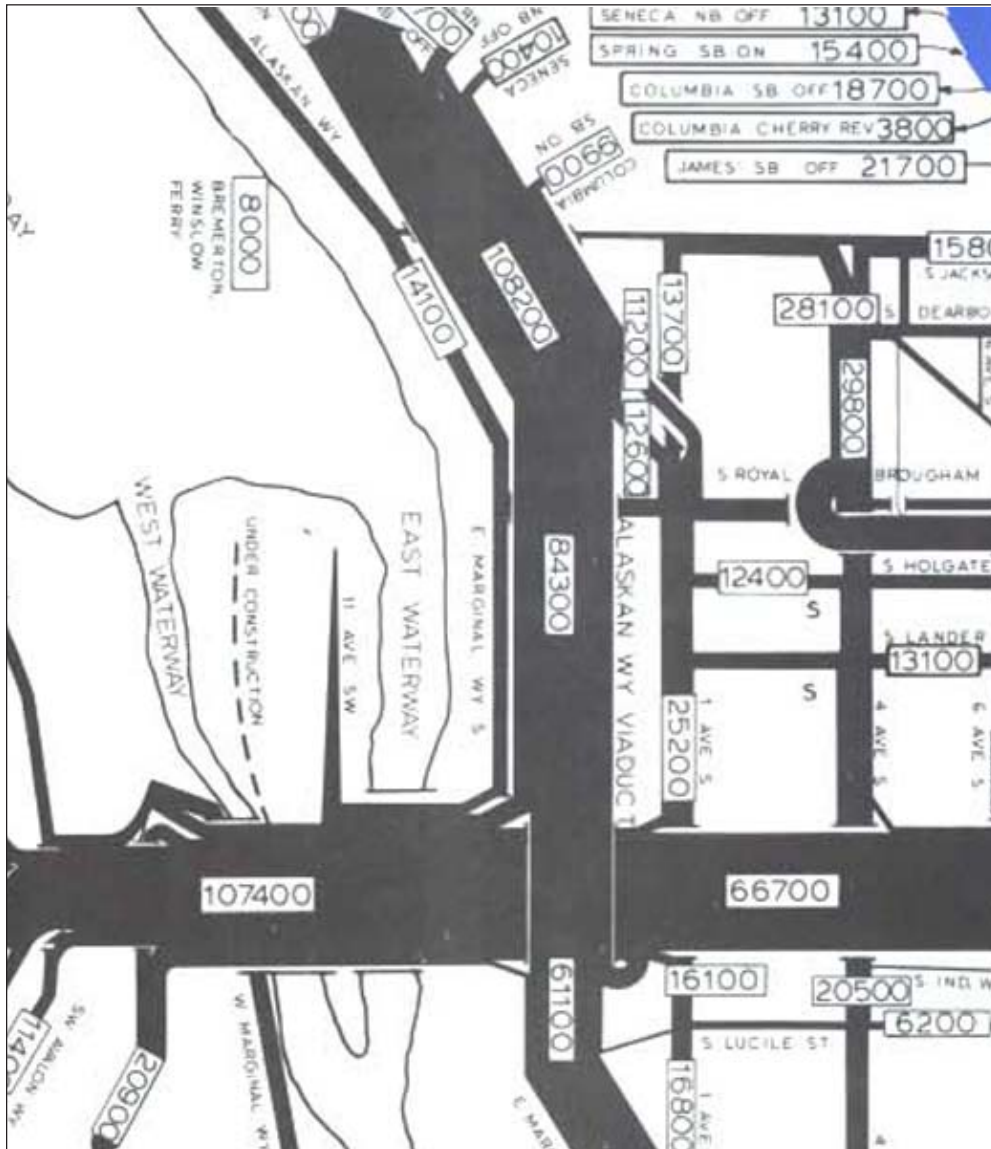
Overview

- Large numbers of visitors, both from the Seattle area and from tourists, are attracted to the historic neighborhoods of Pioneer Square and International District. In addition to the retail and cultural attractions, they are near major sports venues and the Exhibition Hall. The transportation system also accommodates office users and the residential populations.
- Vehicular circulation in the Downtown network is set up to operate as a coordinated system between Denny Way to the north, Yesler Way to the south and Fifth Avenue west to Elliott Bay.
- The street grid shifts at Yesler Way, but Second Avenue continues via the Second Avenue Extension, connecting to Fourth Avenue South, which takes traffic to both I-5 and I-90.
- Extensive bus transit service is provided within downtown Seattle. Most Metro bus routes serve downtown. The Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel, Waterfront Streetcar, and Seattle Center Monorail System provide additional access points and circulation within the downtown area.
- Pioneer Square and the International District, have an excellent pedestrian environment, with wide sidewalks and high-quality street furniture and landscaping. The terrain is easily walkable in Pioneer Square and much of the International District.



Vehicular Circulation

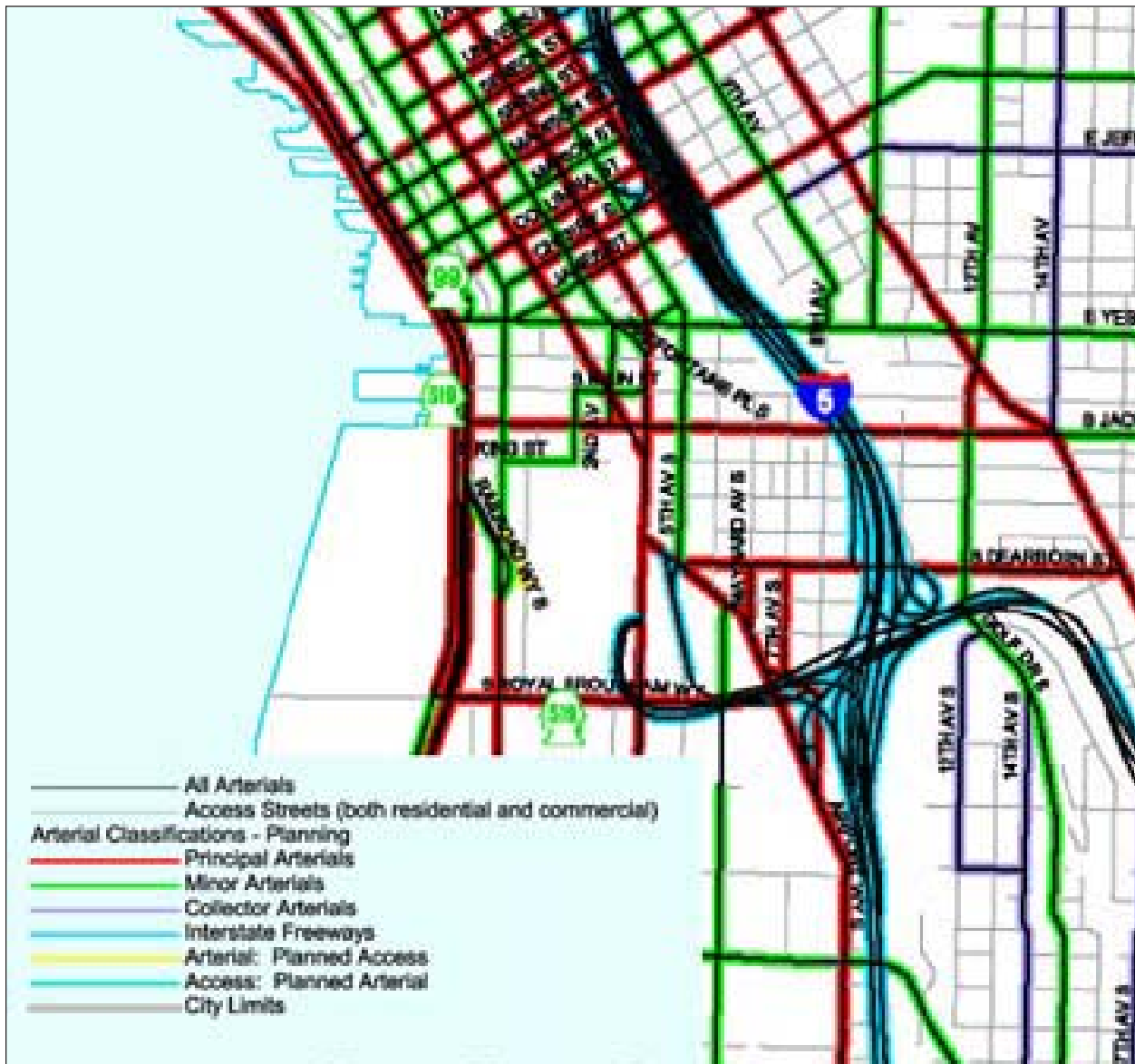
- Circulation in the Downtown network is set up to operate as a coordinated system between Denny Way to the north, Yesler Way to the south and 5th Avenue west to Elliott Bay. The signal system is coordinated to optimize pedestrian, transit and general purpose traffic during both peak and off-peak hours; one intersection cannot be adjusted independently of all the others without adversely affecting the entire system.
- The street grid shifts at Yesler Way, but Second Avenue continues via the Second Avenue Extension, connecting to Fourth Avenue South, which takes traffic to both I-5 and I-90.
- Third Avenue South and Second Avenue Extension meet to form a triangular island near Jackson Street where an extensive re-build of the bus stop has just been completed. Third Avenue South is a short auxiliary road with a 20' curb-to-curb width that accommodates one-travel lane, parking and transit layover zones.
- Regional connections to Pioneer Square use James and Cherry Streets, which provide access to I-5. Pioneer Square has access to SR-99 via First Avenue South.



Traffic flow in Pioneer Square

Street Classifications

- The City's Street Classifications are intended to integrate multiple vehicular, freight and pedestrian needs, minimize modal conflicts, reflect and reinforce adjacent land use, and provide the basis for identifying and prioritizing capital improvements and operating changes. The transit classification identifies a street's suitability for serving as a route for different levels of bus service.
- The Pedestrian Classification identifies a street's role in the downtown pedestrian circulation network, distinguishing between streets according to the volume and type of pedestrian activity anticipated. Green Streets are designated rights-of-way where the street will provide open space and enhanced pedestrian circulation.



Street classifications in Pioneer Square

Transit Service

- In Pioneer Square, the primary Metro transit corridors include First Avenue / First Avenue South, Fourth Avenue South and South Jackson Street for bus routes connecting downtown to South Downtown and further points South, and Southwest and Southeast Seattle. Service on these north/south corridors is 10 minutes or better during all hours of operation.
- The Waterfront Streetcar provides good connections to the Washington State Ferries system and to regional transit service at Union and King Street Stations. It is more attractive to tourists than commuters due to relatively infrequent service.
- King Street Station is a major transit resource for Pioneer Square, with service from Amtrak and commuter rail.



Selected Metro routes through Pioneer Square

Map courtesy of King County Metro Transit, Seattle, WA 9/02

Pedestrian Environment

- The active uses along the streets, the quality of the buildings and streetscape make Pioneer Square an attractive pedestrian environment.
- Generally, the sidewalks vary in width between 12 feet and 18 feet, and are in good condition. The Occidental Mall is a major pedestrian place; the south side of the Yesler Street station is adjacent to this pedestrian resource.



Bicycle Network

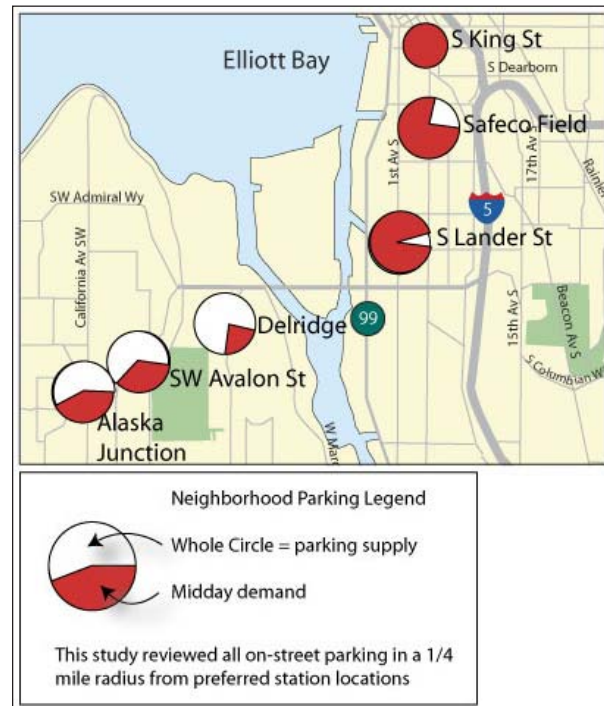
- Second Avenue has an important west-side bicycle lane for southbound bicycle commuters to South Main Street.
- Similar to downtown, bicycle commuters use a wide variety of arterial streets, although are hampered by the one-way street system, steep grade changes and shifting street grids.
- Bikestation Seattle and its clean mobility center recently opened in the Mottman Building (north of the Police Museum) on Third Avenue South, with funding from King County Metro Transit, Bikestation (a non-profit organization), Flexcar, the City of Seattle, Sound Transit, and WestStart (an advanced transportation technology organization).
- Alaskan Way is part of the bicycle circulation network for the region and an important arterial for its flat connection between the Elliott Bay Trail to the north and streets connecting to Pioneer Square, the International District, and points beyond to the south. It is a posted bicycle route, but like most Downtown bicycle routes, no space has been reserved for bicycling exclusively.



Bicycle trails through the Pioneer Square area

Parking

- Large parking reservoirs serve the stadiums. During non-event times, Pioneer Square employees utilize some of the parking capacity of the nearby surface lots.
- On-street parking in Pioneer Square is generally regulated with parking meters, various load zones, and commercial vehicle load zone (yellow) meters. Several of the east-west arterial streets have AM and PM peak-period restrictions.
- The Puget Sound Regional Council collects off-street parking supply, utilization and rates information for the downtown Seattle area, Lower Queen Anne and other Seattle neighborhoods, with the most recent data available from 2002. For off-street parking, most of the non-residential development has parking provided on-site, although this is less true for the older historic buildings.
- Several parking studies have been completed for the Kingdome, Safeco Field and Seahawks Stadium. Large parking reservoirs serve the stadiums. During non-event times, Pioneer Square employees utilize some of the parking capacity of the nearby surface lots. Both Pioneer Square and International District neighborhoods have active business and residential community organizations involved in parking impacts and issues from the stadia.
- In May 2003, the Pioneer Square Community Association's parking committee, with City of Seattle support, launched their "Parking Round the Square" parking validation program to help create more short-term parking for customers and market the business district. More information is available at <http://www.pioneersquare.org/token/parksplash.swf>. The Chinatown/International District neighborhood recently completed the Chinatown-International District Resident and Employee Parking Needs Assessment. Their report is available online at <http://www.cityofseattle.org/transportation/pdf/CIDParkingNeedsAssessment.pdf>.



Parking meters in Pioneer Square

